



School Farm Newsletter  
October 25, 2024

Dear Friends,

If I were to state my biggest yearly wish for the South Whidbey School Farms program, **it would be to have a bountiful harvest for the students to enjoy when they return to school in September.** I'm proud to say that over the summer, we were able to stock the high school farmstand with plenty of summer produce and provide our partners at Whidbey Island Nourishes with lots of veggies for their Weekend Meal Program. But when the students return, it brings the Farm Team so much joy to watch them harvesting and enjoying the healthy snacks our gardens have to offer. **Every class ends with an opportunity for 'garden nibbles,' and this year has been a great success, with cherry tomatoes, husk cherries, mouse melons, salad turnips, cucumbers, green beans, sorrel ('sour grass'), raspberries, apples, huckleberries and more being eaten with excitement.**





That's just the tip of the iceberg. Jumping right in at the first week of school, our 5th-grade classes made pesto out of abundant basil and got busy chopping juicy tomatoes for spaghetti sauce. In the following weeks, students have been harvesting potatoes, dried beans, and winter squash to keep our class kitchen busy through the rest of Fall and Winter. **Students have also collected, sorted, and saved seeds from flowers and veggies for next year's planting.**





Harvesting is the most exciting task we do, but now that the cooler weather of fall has arrived, we have been clearing garden beds that are done for the year. **Extra effort has been put into cover cropping and mulching beds** as they are ready for more organic matter that will nourish next year's plants.

**Sometimes, I think about what a rich program we have, with hundreds of students helping to make our garden grow and thrive each week.** I worry we might run out of tasks for everyone, but then I look around and remember that a garden's work is never done. **There's always more to do, and every task offers our students real-life experiences for growth and learning.**



Now, our harvest season is quickly passing by, and soon it will be time to take stock of our year, reflecting on what worked and what didn't, what new projects we might try, and what new veggies we will plant - all in preparation for next year's season. **In the meantime, we still have plenty of tasks for students to finish:** putting the gardens to bed, making signs, organizing equipment, growing microgreens, cooking from our store of vegetables, and exploring what the Farm looks like during the colder months. **The cycles of life don't stop; they just slow down a bit.**

-Farmer Brian



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